

Testimony in Favor of HB 1412

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Chairman Louser, and members of the House Industry, Business and Labor Committee,

My name is Chelsea Ridge, and I am the chairwomen of the North Dakota Public Health Association (NDPHA) Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs Section. The mission of NDPHA is to improve, promote and protect health for residents of North Dakota through leadership in policy, partnerships, and best practices. I am here to provide testimony in favor to House Bill 1412, relating to the classification of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) as tobacco products.

HB 1412 would finally classify vaping products as tobacco products, which would require a state tobacco retail license and streamline local compliance. This is important because, with required state tobacco licenses we will know where these businesses are located and streamline local compliance for our law enforcement agencies. Currently 14 cities in North Dakota have adopted this language into their city ordinances. With classification of tobacco products law enforcement can more efficiently conduct compliance checks for vaping products.

ENDS or vaping products deliver the same addictive chemical found within traditional tobacco, nicotine. Nicotine releases a chemical called dopamine in the same regions of the brain as other addictive drugs. Inhaled smoke delivers nicotine to the brain within 10 seconds, which makes it very addictive. The average cigarette contains about 5mg of nicotine, ENDS liquids at vape shops can contain nicotine concentrations in ranges from 40mg to 90mg of nicotine.

The North Dakota Public Health Association urges you to pass HB1412 for statewide compliance, licensing, and taxation of these products.

Sincerely,

Chelsea Ridge
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